

PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SPRING

By Randy Miller, Allrite Home and Remodeling

There's a reason why we all know the phrase "Spring Cleaning." Having just come off the cold and snowy winter season, everything is dirty and grungy. Winter winds can blow things around and expose potential problems with your home. As we leave winter behind, now is a great time to go over a list of home check-up items to look at as part of your spring clean-up process.

1. Look at your gutters and downspouts. Look inside the gutters and clear any visible debris that may have collected. Take a look at the hangers which are holding the gutters to the fascia, and make sure none of them have come loose from the weight of the snow and ice. Also look at the downspouts and the extensions to make sure that they are attached to the house and not loose. Also be sure the extensions are working to keep the water away from the foundation of the house. Next, run a hose (after you have reopened your hose spicket) thru the gutters and check for any ponding in the gutters. Make sure that the water is flowing thru the downspouts and not backing up. If you see any ponding or if your water maintenance system is just in bad shape, reach out to a professional contractor to assist in replacing the system properly, along with verifying that the system is the proper size for the house or garage.
2. Look at the ground area around your home. The snow and ice, along with the bitter cold, can cause the ground to heave and then settle. Unfortunately, it doesn't always settle flat or even pitched away from the house like it was before. We always recommend having a professional landscaper add enough gravel and dirt so that is at the height of the block (or poured basement foundation) and sloped away from the foundation.
3. HVAC outdoor condensing unit should be covered for the winter months, but not to completely enclose it (mice love those areas). For the springtime though, remove the covering, spray down the entire unit and remove any debris around the area for a minimum of a 12-18 inch clearing. It is best to remove and replace your filters at this time of year to prepare for the air condition season. This is also a good time of year to schedule a duct cleaning from a qualified professional contractor.
4. Do a visual inspection of the exterior of the house:

- Look at the condition of your roof shingles. Inspect for cracked or split shingles. In addition, check a few tabs to see how easy they come loose. If the tabs lift easily and there is visible cracking or splitting, it's time to have a professional roofing company out to do an evaluation.
- Look at windows and doors. Inspect for any cracks in the glass. In addition, inspect the trim around the windows. If the trim is soft to the touch or paint is peeling, it's time for some TLC. One good option is to make these areas less of a maintenance concern in future years by opting to wrap the trim with aluminum.
- Look at the entire house, including siding/brick/stone. Inspect for loose panels, cracked or peeling wood siding, loose brick ledges, and missing mortar or caulk. All of these issues, if not treated, could potentially cause water problems in your home.
- Look at your soffit venting. If the panels are filled with debris or cobwebs, be sure to wipe or vacuum the areas out to improve air flow to your attic, especially as we enter a warmer season. Use a paper clip to poke through open slats and verify that they were cut open properly. If they are not opened up, or your tired of the maintenance required, contact a professional siding company to obtain a quote on having the work done correctly.
- Look at the insulation levels in your attic, and be sure to check on whether you can see light coming from your attic. In addition, look at the outer edges for baffle chutes. These are plastic or cardboard and allow air to go up to the exhaust venting without restriction. Should you be unsure as to if your attic is properly ventilated or insulated, be sure to reach out to an insulation professional for an evaluation.

We hope you find these tips for spring prep of your home helpful!

